

### REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Initially, Applicants note that the Examiner states that Applicants have not filed a certified copy of Japanese priority application number 2002-305832, filed October 21, 2002. Applicants, however, filed the certified copy of this document on January 8, 2004, with a paper entitled Submission of Priority Document. Accordingly, Applicant requests favorable consideration of these papers.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 11-17, and 19 are presented for consideration. Claims 1 and 17 are independent. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 16, and 17 have been amended to clarify features of the present invention. Support for these changes can be found in the application as originally filed. For example, regarding the changes to claims 1 and 17, the Examiner's attention is directed to the discussion in the subject specification on page 29, line 16, to page 30, line 13, support for the changes to claim 3 may be found in the discussion on page 13, line 26, to page 14, line 5, and support for the changes to claim 16 may be found in the discussion on page 20, lines 2-8. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the Office Action dated June 10, 2008.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 16, 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0103608 to Pearson et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,918,213 to Bernard et al. Claims 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Pearson et al. publication in view of the Bernard et al. patent

as applied above to claim 1, and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0250530 to Tanaka. Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Pearson et al. publication in view of the Bernard et al. publication as applied above to claim 1, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,243,682 to Eghtesadi et al. Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach or suggest many features of the present invention, as previously recited in these claims. Therefore, these rejections are respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 17, as presented, amplify the distinctions between the present invention and the cited art.

In one aspect of the present invention, independent claim 1 recites an information processing apparatus including a manipulation procedure database in which manipulation procedures selectable by a user are described hierarchically, a voice output unit which outputs voice information regarding the manipulation procedures, a determination unit which determines designation of the user, wherein when the user designates a selection during a time in which voice information regarding a present manipulation procedure is outputted, or after an output of the voice information regarding the present manipulation procedure is finished and before an output of voice information regarding a next manipulation procedure is started, the determination unit determines that the present manipulation procedure is selected by the user, and a control unit which, if a manipulation procedure contained in a lower hierarchy than a present hierarchy containing the determined manipulation procedure exists, controls the voice output unit to output voice information regarding the manipulation procedure contained in the lower hierarchy lower than the present hierarchy, and which, if a manipulation procedure contained in a lower hierarchy than the present hierarchy does not exist, controls the voice output unit to output voice information regarding a manipulation procedure contained in a top hierarchy different from a top hierarchy of the present hierarchy.

In another aspect of the present invention, independent claim 17 recites a method of controlling an information processing apparatus which includes a manipulation procedure database in which manipulation procedures selectable by a user are described hierarchically, and a voice output unit outputs voice information regarding the manipulation procedures. The method includes the steps of determining a designation of the user, wherein when the user designates a selection during the time in which voice information regarding a present manipulation procedure is outputted, or after an output of the voice information regarding the present manipulation procedure is finished and before an output of voice information regarding a next manipulation procedure is started, the determining step determines that the present manipulation procedure is selected by the user, controlling, if a manipulation procedure contained in a lower hierarchy than a present hierarchy containing the determined manipulation procedure exists, the voice output unit to output voice information regarding the manipulation procedure contained in the lower hierarchy, and controlling, if a manipulation procedure contained in a lower hierarchy than the present hierarchy containing the determined manipulation procedure does not exist, the voice output unit outputs voice information regarding a manipulation procedure contained in a top hierarchy different from a top hierarchy of the present hierarchy.

By such an arrangement, in the present invention, when a user designates a selection during a time in which voice information regarding a present manipulation procedure is outputted by a voice output unit, a determination can be made that the present manipulation procedure is selected by the user. Also, when the user designates a selection after the output of the voice information regarding the present manipulation procedure is finished and before an output of voice information regarding a next manipulation procedure is started, a determination can be made that the present manipulation is selected by the user. For example, as discussed in the subject specification on pages 29-30, the voice

output unit starts outputs of voice information of “automatic”, “A4”, “A4R”, and “A3”, regarding manipulation procedures contained in a hierarchy relating to sheet selection, and when the user designates a selection during a time in which voice information of “A4” is outputted, a determination can be made that “A4” is selected by the user. Also, if the user designates a selection after an output of the voice information of “A4” is finished and before an output of voice information of “A4R” is started, a determination can be made that “A4” is selected by the user.

Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach or suggest such features of the present invention, as recited in independent claims 1 and 17.

The Pearson et al. publication teaches a user interface for an audio telecommunications system in which a caller is prompted with option messages such as “For Sales Press 1”, “For Customer Service Press 2”, . . . , “To Change The Presentation of the Options, Press #”, so that the caller presses a key which corresponds to an option that the caller desires and selects. Therefore, the arrangement in the Pearson et al. publication requires keys corresponding to the number of options, and each key needs to correspond to one option, so that one option may be selected.

In marked contrast to the arrangement in the Pearson et al. publication, in the present invention, a user need only operate one key in order to select a manipulation procedure, in the manner discussed above. Therefore, a user, for example, with a visual handicap, can accurately, easily and quickly select a manipulation procedure that is desired. To the contrary, the device in the Pearson et al. publication requires that the user complexly operate many keys in order to select one manipulation procedure. Thus, a user with, for example, a visual handicap, would not be able to accurately, easily or quickly select a desired manipulation procedure using the device in the Pearson et al. publication.

The Bernard et al. patent teaches a system that determines whether a number entered by a user is valid or invalid. When an entered number is invalid, the system prompts the user to re-enter a number. Further, that system allows a user to re-enter a number a predetermined number of times. If an entered number is still invalid, the system prompts the user to select a different catalog number. In marked contrast to the arrangement in the Bernard et al. patent, in the present invention, an invalid selection does not occur, because a selectable manipulation procedure is the only one presented by the apparatus. In this regard, Applicants respectfully traverse the pre-condition presented by the Examiner in the Office Action on page 4, lines 16-17. Rather, in the present invention, a manipulation procedure, which is valid, is always determined.

For the reasons noted above, Applicants submit that the present invention, as recited in independent claims 1 and 17, is patentably defined over the Pearson et al. publication or the Bernard et al. patent, whether those citations are taken individually or in combination.

Applicants further submit that the remaining art cited does not cure the deficiencies noted above with respect to those citations.

The Examiner relies on the Tanaka publication for teaching an input unit for a portable telephone, in which a plurality of buttons, which are associated with different instructions, respectively, correspond to a plurality of fingers of a user and a detection unit detects which of the buttons has been depressed. The Examiner relies on the Eghtesadi et al. patent for teaching a universal access photocopier in which an information processing apparatus is a copying machine and manipulation procedures correspond to setting functions for a copying operation of the copying machine. Applicants submit, however, that neither the Tanaka publication nor the Eghtesadi et al. patent teaches or suggest salient features of Applicants' present invention, as recited in independent claims 1 and 17, which have been discussed above. Applicants submit, therefore, that this art adds

nothing to the teachings of the Pearson et al. publication or the Bernard et al. patent that would render obvious Applicants' present invention, as recited in those independent claims.

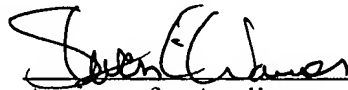
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present invention, as recited in independent claims 1 and 17, is patentably defined over the cited art, whether that art is taken alone or in combination.

Dependent claims 3, 4, 6, 11-16 and 19 also should be deemed allowable, in their own right, for defining other patentable features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Further individual consideration of these dependent claims is requested.

Applicants submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Applicants request favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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